

# Avid

## Avid MediaServer™

### Release 2.0 Release Notes

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These are the release notes for Release 2.0 of Avid MediaServer (including the MediaServer Database).

This document describes new features, compatibility issues with previous releases, and lists fixed bugs and all known remaining bugs or limitations.



*This document includes MediaServer-related information for client workstations. Information that is not MediaServer-related is described in the release notes for those products.*

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## Symbols and Conventions

These release notes use the following special symbols and conventions:

Look here in the margin  
for tips.

In the margin you will find tips that help you perform tasks more easily and efficiently.



A check mark indicates a bug that has been fixed.



An X indicates a known bug or limitation. Where appropriate, a workaround is provided.



*A note provides important related information, reminders, recommendations, and strong suggestions.*



**A caution means that a specific action you take could cause harm to your computer or cause you to lose data.**

## New Features in Release 2.0

The following sections introduce new functionality introduced in Version 2.0 of the MediaServer.

### MediaServer Features

- **MediaServer performance improvements** — New and existing MediaServers with 250-MHz processors can now support up to 12 concurrent active streams (12 playing/editing; 10 recording and 2 playing/editing). Existing server systems with 200-MHz processors can now support 8 clients (8 playing/editing; 4 recording and 4 playing/editing).

- **Scalable architecture** — A scalable, hardware block-based architecture allows a 6-client configuration to be upgraded to a 12-client configuration (within the limitations of the SGI CHALLENGE architecture).
- **Improved client handling** — The MediaServer bandwidth allocation and preemption mechanism has been improved to allow connections to be moved after login. Clients are now only denied access to the server or preempted under conditions in which the system is truly being used to its maximum play/record limit.
- **Faster edit-to-air** — NewsCutter® clients now provide a story “posting” feature that performs a set of operations necessary to quickly make a story available for airing on AirPlay® MP clients. The mechanism by which AirPlay MP clients import bins and media objects is improved to allow AirPlay to be interrupted (paused) while rescanning bins, and to reduce the time taken to open, save, and close bins.
- **Server monitoring facility added to client user interface** — A new graphical tool allows users to monitor the current status of the server bandwidth and the availability of record and playback streams, volume reservations, and disk space.

## MediaServer Database Features

- **MediaServer Database on a separate server** — The MediaServer Database now resides on a dedicated Windows NT® system, apart from the MediaServer system so that database load can never impact critical broadcast operations. Despite the physical separation of the MediaServer and the database, the two systems are seamlessly integrated, communicating transparently over the network.
- **External Access to the MediaServer Database** — The database now provides access to AvidNews and to external users of third-party query applications.

- **Database resynchronization** — The database can now be resynchronized to eliminate any mismatch between the media stored on server volumes and the media represented in the database.
- **Database reconnect** — Clients can now reconnect to the database after losing their connection without exiting the client application. Similarly, the MediaServer Shared Disk Service can reconnect to the database without the server being brought down.
- **More flexible database search specification** — The database now allows a wider range of searches, including the abilities to specify “NOT” on individual criteria, to search by type of object, and finding clips that are not referenced by any stories and can therefore be deleted.
- **Facility for database customization provided** — The MediaServer Database Administration Tool allows the site administrator to customize database attributes and catalogs.



*The MediaServer Database Administration Tool is supplied on the NewsCutter installation diskettes and can be installed by selecting the appropriate option during the NewsCutter installation procedure.*

- **Search results display media type** — Database search results now include a bin-like graphical indication of the type of clip (Master Clip, Sub Clip, Story, Effect, Motion Effect, or Rendered Effect).
- **Search results display media status** — Database search results are now color-coded to indicate whether objects are playable from the server.
- **Database user preferences saved** — Database preferences (such as windows positions, and so on) are now saved together with other client preferences in the current project.
- **Easier modification of media objects in the database** — Multiple objects can now be selected from the media browser and their attributes edited in *batch* mode.
- **General database user interface improvements** — The database user interface has been improved to reduce the amount of windows (and thus screen space) that it consumes.

- **Interruptible head frame display** — The display of head frames for objects found in the database can now be interrupted without discarding the search results.
- **Auto-logging of predefined sets of database attributes** — Pre-defined sets of database attribute values and catalog assignments can now be specified and then be selected from the Record Tool to apply to recorded clips.
- **Save database searches** — Sets of database search criteria can now be saved as a named search that can later be recalled and performed whenever a user requires it.

## Compatibility

Version 2.0 of the MediaServer and MediaServer Database support only Version 4.0 of the NewsCutter, AirPlay MP, and Media Recorder® clients.

## Special Notes

The Avid-recommended MediaServer Database backup and restore procedures described in the *Avid MediaServer Administration Guide* assume that your site is configured to continuously back up the database logical logs to tape. This option is recommended because it allows you to restore the database to within a few transactions of its pre-failure state in the event of a catastrophic loss of data.

Please note that if you choose at install time *not* to configure the database to perform continuous backup of the logical logs (you cannot change backup modes at a later date), you will only be able to restore the database to the state that it was in at the time that the last database data backup was made. Also note that if you choose this backup mode, you can ignore all logical log-related backup information in the documentation.

## Documentation Changes

The 508 area code used in our corporate telephone numbers will change to area code 978 on September 1, 1997.

## Fixed Bugs in Release 2.0

- ✓ The database resynchronization option (-R) to the **startsds** command was previously unavailable. Two resynchronization options (-R and -D) are now available.
- ✓ Previously, when a MediaServer Database search returned more items than could be displayed in a single page, the displayed list would not be updated if some items were deleted. This problem has been fixed.
- ✓ Previously, the duration of PAL footage in the MediaServer Database would differ from the duration listed in the bin. This problem has been fixed.
- ✓ Previously, the client would crash if the following sequence of events took place: you dragged a story copied from the MediaServer Database into the Timeline, a pop-up monitor, or a playlist; a user on another client updated the story and re-cataloged it; you attempted to replace the same story in the Timeline, pop-up monitor, or playlist. This problem has been fixed.
- ✓ Previously, you needed to reboot all the clients after the MediaServer Database had been stopped and then restarted in order for those clients to access the database. This problem has been fixed.
- ✓ Previously, if you were playing a clip that was simultaneously being recorded on another client, and you dragged an updated version of the clip from the MediaServer Database into your bin while the previous version of the clip was displaying in the pop-up monitor, the client would crash. This problem has been fixed.

- ✓ Previously, the MediaServer could experience problems creating and deleting media if the MediaServer Database was not functioning correctly. This problem has been fixed.
- ✓ Previously, when deleting objects from the Media Browser, the system would not let you choose to delete the associated media from the MediaServer if the object was a composition. This problem has been fixed.
- ✓ Previously, Media Browser preferences were not retained between NewsCutter sessions. This functionality has been added.
- ✓ Previously, if you attempted to delete more than 100 manually cataloged media files from the MediaServer Database, the database might have returned an error message and back out of the operation. This problem has been fixed.
- ✓ Previously, motion effects and freeze frame clips that were manually added to the MediaServer Database (via the Catalog option in the Bin menu) would have incorrect durations displayed in the Media Browser. This problem has been fixed.
- ✓ Previously, if the client disconnected from the server due to an error, the first attempt to reconnect may have failed. This problem has been fixed.

## Software Limitations

Avid strongly recommends that you do not record media across server volumes. That is, you should record *all* tracks of video and audio to the same volume. Any media whose video and audio components *are* recorded across volumes in this manner may become corrupted following a resynchronization of the MediaServer Database.

Avid also recommends against deleting individual media tracks from a clip (for example, deleting the video track or one or both of the audio tracks). Clips whose media *is* partially deleted in this manner may become corrupted following a resynchronization of the MediaServer Database.

## Known Bugs



**MediaServer Database unavailability causes client timeout problems.** If a client attempts to access any functionality that attempts to communicate with the database while the database server is down or the Database network connection is disrupted results in a lengthy (3 to 5 minutes) delay as the client attempts unsuccessfully to establish a connection to the database. There is no way to interrupt the connection attempt.

If attempting to establish a connection to the MediaServer, the connection *will* be made successfully at the end of the delay. If attempting to access database functionality, the attempt will timeout after the delay.

**Workaround:** If the database server becomes unavailable, you should perform the following steps as quickly as possible:

1. Inform all client workstation users to avoid any operations that require the database. They should avoid:
  - Choosing Catalog from the Bin menu.
  - Choosing any options from the Network menu.

- Choosing any options from the Database menu.
  - Choosing an AutoAttribute Set from the Record Tool or pushing the AutoAttribute Set Edit button.
2. Invalidate the database server's host address in the SetNet control panel on each client workstation:
- a. From the Apple menu, point to Control Panels and then choose SetNet from the submenu that opens.
  - b. Append any alphabetic character to the end of the database server's specified Host address. This character will invalidate the server's address so that the client attempts to establish a connection to the database will result in a dialog box informing the user that the database is down or inaccessible appears immediately.
  - c. Close the SetNet control panel.



*You do not have to quit the client application in order to make this change and for it to take effect.*

3. If the database is likely to be inaccessible for some time, restart the MediaServer Shared Disk Service with the -N option (so that it does not require a database connection). Logged in as root at the MediaServer console, type:

```
> stopsds  
> startsds -N
```

When the database is available again, perform the following steps so that the clients and MediaServer are able to connect to it again:

1. Revalidate the database server's host address in the SetNet control panel on each client workstation:
  - a. From the Apple menu, point to Control Panels and then choose SetNet from the submenu that opens.
  - b. Remove the character that you appended to the end of the database server's specified Host address.
  - c. Close the SetNet control panel.



*You do not have to quit the client application in order to make this change and for it to take effect.*

2. Restart the MediaServer Shared Disk Service, performing a complete resynchronization of the database if clients have been recording or deleting server media while the database was down if possible. Logged in as root at the MediaServer console, type:

```
> stopsds
```

To start the Shared Disk Service without resynchronizing the database:

```
> startsds
```

To start resynchronizing the database:

```
> startsds -D
```



**Loss of connection to the MediaServer Database while recording to a server volume causes write timeout and loss of media.** If a client's connection to the database is disrupted because the database server goes down or the Database network connection is disrupted while recording to a server volume, the client receives timeout errors and the media segment being recorded at the time is lost completely. Other segments of the media remain on the MediaServer, but are inaccessible until the database is resynchronized and are not playable.

**Workaround:** Nothing can be done to recover the lost media. The remaining media should be deleted and the whole clip rerecorded. To delete the media, a resynchronization must first be performed (see the workaround for the previous known bug) to add an entry for the recorded media in the database (the only way it can be accessed for deletion).



**Small media files created by segment trimming may cause deleted master clips to reappear in the MediaServer Database after resynchronization.** When recording to the MediaServer, very small media files are sometimes created when the end of each segment is trimmed back, particularly when using a smaller segment size. These small media files, which do not appear in the database and are therefore dif-

ficult to delete, may cause master clips that have been deleted to return to the database when it is subsequently resynchronized.

**Workaround:** Delete any clips that return to the database from the Media Browser. If you need to remove the small media files, you should call Avid Broadcast Customer Support to obtain a procedure to delete them.

-  **Relinking segmented media does not work correctly.**
-  **Quitting a client application while still logged in to the Avid DNG system may result in the application taking a long time to exit.** During the time taken for the application to exit (a few minutes), it may appear that the system has hung. However, the application will exit normally.
-  **No obvious method for searching the MediaServer Database for an attribute whose value has been left blank.**
- Workaround:** To search for a blank attribute, specify “*Attribute\_Name* does not contain ?” which effectively specifies a search for an attribute that does not contain at least one character.
-  **Posting a story to the server does not initiate the database reconnect mechanism.** The connection between the Shared Disk Service and the MediaServer Database is not reestablished by the Post Story to Server mechanism.
-  **Duration attribute for clips added to the database by a resynchronization becomes 23 hours.** This problem generally occurs when an audio clip being recorded to a server volume while the database is unavailable is stopped before the second segment is complete. In this case, when the database is resynchronized, the clip’s database entry shows its duration as 23 hours.

- X** **The Start and End attributes may contain corrupted timecode information for clips created using the Internal Timecode Generator and added to the database as the result of a resynchronization.** For a master clip recorded to the server using the Internal Timecode Generator when the database is unavailable, the database entry added when the database is resynchronized may contain corrupt start and end timecode information.
- X** **Relatives displayed in the Media Browser persist after all items in the Main panel are deselected.** When one of several stories displayed in the Media Browser is highlighted so that its media relatives are shown in the Relatives panel, these relatives persist even after the story is deselected.
- X** **MediaServer Administration Tool does not report error if a custom attribute is not deleted successfully.**
- X** **DIGI\_INT\_OVERRUN errors may occur when scrubbing server media.** You may encounter DIGI\_INT\_OVERRUN errors when scrubbing over stories comprising server media and unrendered transition effects.

**Workaround:** Click OK and continue.

- X** **Dragging complex media objects from the Media Browser into a bin may sometimes fail with an “omfiHPDomain\_INIT\_FAILED” or “omfiHPDomain\_BAD\_MAGIC” error.** When this occurs, the MediaServer Database connection is lost without notification (the Logout option is still available from the Network menu) and any further attempt to use the database will result in an “SQL error (-457) database may be down or inaccessible” error.

**Workaround:** Log out from and log back in to the Avid DNG system to reestablish your MediaServer Database connection, perform a search to find the problem media object, and then re-attempt to drag it from the Media Browser into a bin. The operation should proceed normally.

## **Supplemental Documentation**

The Informix software used by the MediaServer Database is supplied with an online documentation library. Avid recommends that you refer to this documentation if you need additional information about any database administration tasks covered in the *Avid MediaServer Administration Guide*.

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